

Message

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Sent: 10/23/2017 11:43:49 AM
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Subject: Two articles on Parkersburg, WV warehouse fire

WDTV - BRIDGEPORT

UPDATE: Ash from Parkersburg fire declared non-toxic (Sunday p.m.) PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (WDTV)-- Heavy smoke continues to linger in the sky after a massive fire at a warehouse in Parkersburg Saturday. According to WTAP, Camden Clark Hospital started preparing for aftermath effects of the fire around 9 a.m. Saturday morning. The hospital gathered the necessary supplies to treat potential victims and called in extra nurses. Initial laboratory tests of fallen ash from the Ames fire showed that ash was not toxic to residents, according to Wood County officials. Those officials also reported early air monitoring testing indicated areas around the fire scene were within acceptable quality limits. As a precaution, the Wood County Commission was advising residents to stay inside. More than 30 volunteer fire departments continued to work at the fire scene Sunday along with hundreds of other local, regional and state officials. The Ohio River is being used as a water source to fight the flames to put less of a strain on the Parkersburg water system. The West Virginia National Guard was also supplying foam to firefighters and the Division of Highways is providing additional water.

WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING

With Resources and Finances Strained, Continued Response to Wood County Fire Remains in Question

(Sunday 10:36 pm) With resources and funding in question, officials in Wood County are still trying to determine how to deal with a large industrial fire just outside of the city limits of Parkersburg. The fire, which started about 1 a.m. Saturday and destroyed a warehouse facility, is expected to burn for days as local officials still have no timeline as to when the fire will be out. Thick black smoke continued to billow Sunday night from the building that was once an Ames tool plant. While no injuries have been reported, the scene has been declared a disaster area, Wood County Schools are closed on Monday and local officials have issued a voluntary shelter in place for the surrounding area. The Wood County Commission held an emergency meeting Sunday night to discuss continued response, as city water resources have been strained and volunteer-led firefighting efforts have been stretched to capacity. "I spent a lot of time with the incident commander and the issue gets to be that volunteer fire departments are, therefore, volunteer," said commission president Blair Couch. "It was lucky that it was on a Friday night, Saturday, Sunday because a lot of volunteers were available. We had a lot of units available." With volunteer resource availability lessening, county commissioners were joined at the meeting by representatives from the state Department of Environmental Protection, the State Fire Marshal's Office, the Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety and the Division of Highways, as well as Congressman David McKinley's office. Commissioners said contractor Specialized Professional Services, Inc. of Washington, Pennsylvania estimated costs of extinguishing the fire and other remediation efforts at about \$60,000 per day, which would take at least five more days. The company delivered firefighting foam to the scene over the weekend. "We called this special meeting because we're getting taxed beyond our resources," said Couch in an interview after the meeting. "We've expended funds and reduced the volatile situation to being more manageable, but it continues to burn."... The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection said they have been testing air samples and burnt material from the site, and that the immediate and surrounding area was found to be within acceptable air quality limits. Stewart told the County Commission roughly 9 million gallons of water had been used in attempting to put the fire out, with about 3 million gallons being drawn from the Little Kanawha River to lessen the strain on Parkersburg's water supply. Thirty-one volunteer fire departments from seven counties in West Virginia and Ohio have been assisting with response efforts thus far. Officials from the state Fire Marshal's Office say the cause of the fire has yet to be determined and the investigation is ongoing.